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A BRIEF
ACCOUNT
OF A
Specifick Remedy
For Curing the
King's Evil;

With some OBSERVATIONS, of
general Use and Service to Peo-
ple afflicted with that *Distemper*.

In a Letter to a Friend.

The Third Edition, with Additions.

*The Lord hath created Medicines out of the Earth, and
he that is wise will not abhor them; and hath given
Men Power and Skill, that he might be honoured in
his marvellous Works, Eccus. xxxviii. 4, 6.*

Existimo Deum perfecte & sufficienter in Simplici-
bus composuisse completa morborum quorumcun-
que remedia. — Felix ille qui Simplicibus tuto
atque prompte novit tollere & conculcare mor-
bos. *Helmont.*

K.

By WILLIAM VICKERS, Clergyman.

L O N D O N:

Printed for S. Manship at the Ship against the Royal-
Exchange, Cornhil; and A. Collins at the Black-Boy
against St. Dunstons-Church, Fleetstreet. 1710.

ACCOUNT

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general life and spirit in the
the mind of the author.

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A BRIEF ACCOUNT

OF A

Specifick Remedy

For Curing the

Kings Evil, &c.

IN compliance with your late Request, I have sent you a short Account of my *Specifick Remedy* for curing the *Kings Evil*, a Distemper, you know, I was from my Infancy extremely afflicted withal; which continued so many Years on me, with that Violence, that all Hopes of Cure were given over by my Friends and Self. The Distemper had seiz'd upon both my Arms, upon my Right-Hand, the Fore-finger of my Left, and also upon both my Feet, in such a degree, that several Surgeons were of Opinion, that both Hands

and Feet must be cut off. The Humour likewise fell with that Severity on both Eyes, that the Sight of each was judged irrecoverably lost. In fine, my whole Body became so extremely Weak and Feeble, with continual Runnings in so many places, that for many Years I could neither go nor stand, without Crutches. In this miserable Condition (without any hopes or prospect of Relief) I lived many Years, until it pleased God to direct me unto the Knowledge of those Means, the extraordinary Effects whereof as much exceeded mine and all other Peoples Expectations, as the Benefit reaped did my Merits: by the Use whereof, God be praised, in a very few Months, I became perfectly Sound and Well. It's now full twenty Years since I was heal'd, enjoying as good Health and Sight as most People do, without any Fear or Apprehension of a Relapse, being able to endure the coldest Weather, to read until Midnight, and to walk as much Ground, every Day, as the generality of People do, without suffering any Prejudice thereby. I once thought, as most People do, that the King's Evil, especially in such a high degree as I had it, was incurable; and I had reason to believe it, after many Years Endeavours had been spent for a Cure to so little Purpose, concluding, that when the Endeavours of many able and skilful Physicians, had all along proved ineffectual, there remain'd nothing more to be done. As my sad Condition made me a diligent Enquirer after all sort of Remedies, so I never declined the use of any Means, which might give me the least hopes or prospect of Success.

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I was stroaked twice by King Charles II. and thrice by King James. It's incredible, to tell the great Quantities of *Purges, Vomits, Diet-Drinks, Lime-Waters, Millipedes, Rue-Whitlow-Grass*; besides many other things which I have taken in my Time: But nothing availed, until it pleased God, by a wonderful Providence, to direct me to the Knowledge of this *Specifick Remedy*, which exceeded all my Hopes and Expectations.

Now, in order to give you some Account of this Cure on myself; It providentially came into my Mind, to make Experiment of one single Remedy, believing, that Simplicity of *Medicine* might be as effectual, as that of *Diet*. The use whereof, first of all, I begun internally, with five or six Grains, Morning and Evening, in a Glass of Spring-water; And for external Application, I used an Ointment and *Corectoth*, made with the same Remedy. This Method I continued some time; but afterwards, with much greater Advantage, I infused a certain Quantity of this *Specifick Remedy* in a Gallon of Spring-water, which, when it was fine and clear, became my constant Drink, absolutely abstaining from all other Liquors, except a Glass of Wine now and then, at Meals. By that time I had drunk of this *Specifick Water* 18 or 20 Days, I perceiv'd my Sores to run with a much greater Flux of Matter, than ever I knew them do before. Also, several foul and rotten Bones, in several Joints, came forth, without any Pain or Trouble. And likewise, some hard and un ulcerated Swellings allwaged, and went away with the like Ease. My Strength also increas-

fed

sed considerably, and my usual Pains (upon any sudden Change of Weather) ceased with such a visible Alteration throughout my whole Constitution, that, if I may so express it, I thought myself, in a manner, new created. Two Things I observed very strange and unaccountable: The First was, That whereas my Sores, for the first Month or six Weeks, ran so excessively, that one would have thought it impossible to subsist under so great a Consumption; yet my Strength increased the more; and by how much the more plentifully the Humour spent itself this way, by so much the more hearty and strong I perceiv'd myself to grow. The other thing I observed, was, That my *Urine*, after some time taking of this *Specifick Remedy*, did become as thick and ropy, as tho' it had been blended with Whites of Eggs, or some such-like viscus Matter, which continu'd until all my Sores healed, as they did perfectly in about eight Months, or something less. During which Course, I never found the least Tendency or Disposition unto Sickness, or any other Inconveniency whatsoever, attend the use of these Means, but such a difference for Ease, that there was no Comparison between this Method of Cure, and those I had been formerly treated withal. So easy and pleasant in its Operation, and withal so Efficacious.

I think, it may from hence be concluded, in the general, that this Disease may be led, but not driven; and that the gentlest Methods in any Man's Hands, will be always likely to prove the most successful. Men may salivate and purge their Guts out, and not move it; and

and yet there may be some Simples and Methods of *Diet*, which will effectually remove it, with infinite less Trouble and Vexation, than what People commonly undergo in these Cases. I can truly affirm, from my own Experience, the greater Violence I was treated withal by others, by so much the worse it fared with me. The same, I very well remember, was the usual Complaint of all my Fellow-Sufferers, whereof I had a great Acquaintance, who are long since expired, much the sooner, I fear, for that very Reason.

Having thus set forth the Benefits I have experienced from this *Specifick Remedy*, it may be expected that I should give some Account of the Nature and Quality thereof, by telling the World some pompous Stories of what Tribe it's descended, whether it be Animal, Mineral, or Vegetable; *Alkaly*, or *Acid*, or the like; but I see not what real Advantage this would be to the afflicted. So long as the Thing is safe, and answers the End propos'd, it's no great Matter whether the Patient know its proper Name or no. When it first came to my Knowledg, I must confess, I thought it very unlikely to be a Thing of such surprizing Efficacy; and so foolish was I, like many others, as to depise it for some time, because it was not recommended by some great Person, whose Name and Authority might encourage its Use. But, as I am now fully convinced of that Folly; so am I fully satisfy'd, (contrary to my former Opinions) that there is no *Poison* without its *Antidote*, nor any Disease without its *Specifick*; whereof Nature, more than Art, hath the greatest Number and Advantage;

vantage ; inſomuch that if a Man were to write a Hiſtory of Cures, in all Diſeaſes, moſt of them, I believe, would be found accompliſh'd by ſome of the moſt ſimple and uncompounded Remedies ; and moreover, that ſuch, for the moſt part, were diſcovered rather by divine Revelation, Chance, or Accident, than by Rational Conjectures from Speculative Hypotheſes, or any other Philoſophick Methods. The *Indians*, who are perfect Strangers unto the Animal Oeconomy, having no other Knowledge of Phyſick and Surgery, than what the Light of Nature helpeth them to, cure all their Diſeaſes by the Application of their own *Roots* and *Plants* ; being ſo perfectly ſkilled in the Vertues of Simples, that of ſome they prepare *Poiſons*, of others *Antidotes* ;

*Piſo de
Med.
Braſ.*

The old *Galenists*, who preſcrib'd Simples only, were as certain and ſucceſſful in their Cures, as our modern Phyſicians have been with all their Improvements. *Bagliv*, an Author of no mean Repute, ſaith, That the *Empiricks*, who deſpiſed the Methods and Indications of the *Rationaliſt*, cured the moſt ſtubborn and grievous Diſeaſes, with the uſe of *Specificks*, as they call them. And in another Place, ſaith the ſame Author, This is evident, that both acute and chronical Diſeaſes, will be happily cured by that Man, who by Chance, or a long train of Experience, hath found out a Remedy to cure the Diſeaſe Specifically. It were, indeed, to be wiſhed, ſaith our *Engliſh Hippocrates*, That the Sick might arrive to Health, by a newer Way, viz. by the help of *Specificks*, if any ſuch can be found : And he (ſaith the Doctor) may deſervedly be called a Phyſician, that hath ſuch a Medicine, which

*Dr. Sydenham's
Pref.*

which is able to destroy the Species of the Disease. And no doubt (saith he) but out of that abundant Plenitude, with which Nature overflows, there is sufficient for the Cure of all those Diseases which afflict Mankind; and that, near at hand, in every Country. And, therefore, it is much to be lamented, that the Nature of Plants is no better known to us, which seem to be the chiefest Part of the Materia Medica, and the likeliest to afford such Remedies. Sir William Temple likewise, among Miscell. his other useful and excellent Observations, hath 153. this: The great Defects in this excellent Science, speaking of Physick, seem chiefly owing to the Professors Application (especially since Galen's time) running so much upon Method, and so little upon Medicine: And in this to have addicted themselves so much to Composition, and neglected the Use of Simples, as well as the Enquiries and Records of Specifick Remedies. Hippocrates very much de- Le Clerc's pended on the Use of Specificks; declaring, Hist. That his own Experience of them, and that of his Predecessors, was sufficient to recommend their Use; tho' he could give no rational Account of their Effects. Galen like- Lib. 2. wise relates several Cures done by some Simples, whereof he could give no Account of their Operation. And Solenander says, He could tell what were the Diseases of each Country, by the Herbs that were most common in it. As among the Danes and Dutch, with whom the Scurvy is very frequent, Sourvy-grass groweth plentifully. The Honourable and Learned Mr. Boyle had so good an Opinion of the Excellency of Specificks, that he hath written a Discourse

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rulam.

Use of
Nat. Exp.
Philosoph.

of the Reconcilableness of *Specifick Medicines* to the *Corpuscular Philosophy*, to recommend their Usefulness; well approved of among the Ancients, tho' now rejected by some Moderns, through a vain Pretence to I know not what Philosophy. If a Man knew but the Vertues of our own Native *Simples*, and could use them with that Simplicity as Nature yieldeth them, I know not but Men might thereby become as famous as the great *Hippocrates*, who studied *Nature* more than *Art*; and thought it not below him to inform himself of Remedies from the meanest People, when confirmed by Experience. If we consider the *Lucriferousness of Things*, saith our great Naturalist, and their *Medical Vertues*, we shall find, that we trample upon many things, for which we should have cause to kneel and offer God Praises, if we knew all their *Qualities and Uses*. And second to him, the Honourable Mr. Boyle hath, among his other excellent Discourses, one Essay, to shew, That there is scarce any thing in *Nature*, whereof the *Uses to humane Life* are yet thoroughly understood. And to the same purpose speaks *Paracelsus*, There is nothing so Vile and Despicable, but what may conduce to the Use and Health of Man. 'How many Cures, saith Baglivi, are brought to pass, by those contemptible Things, which, to our thinking, are Useless, and unworthy of our Notice; nay, oftentimes, according to our Way of Reasoning, directly opposite to the Nature of the Disease? Divers People, saith he, worn out with the long Tyranny of Diseases, and the frustraneous Use of all the known Methods

' Methods and Remedies, have been happily
 ' recover'd by some Medicines, whereunto
 ' Physicians and Surgeons have been perfect
 ' Strangers. Let this convince us of the Rash-
 ness, if not Folly, of some Men, who abso-
 lutely pronounce those Diseases incurable,
 wherein themselves have not succeeded, and
 decry all other Means as useless and dan-
 gerous, whereof themselves are not the sole Pro-
 prietors. This Partiality and Selfishness, I
 reckon among those numerous Hindrances ob-
 structing the Improvement of Physick; and
 in this respect particularly, that hereby many
 a good Medicine, (brought to Light by Expe-
 rience, or Chance, which might be of great
 Use and Service to the Publick) is designedly
 cried down, for that very Reason. But to
 return to our Author: ' It's not altogether
 ' much Learning, (*said he*) but certain and
 ' demonstrative Knowledge, rais'd from Ex-
 ' perience, that will do our Business. We
 ' must not dispute, but try what Nature yield-
 ' eth for the Good of Mankind; and what we
 ' cannot reach by Speculation, we must not
 ' presently brand for Impossibility in Nature,
 ' and reproach her with the Infirmary of our
 ' Art. We must bend our Thoughts, with all
 ' Diligence and Constancy, to disclose new
 ' Medicines and Methods for curing those Dis-
 ' eases we call incurable. For tho' some of
 ' them are in effect incurable; yet the grea-
 ' test part of them are only such, not from the
 ' Impossibility of the Thing, but from our
 ' Weakness. In fine, (*said he*) we ought to
 ' make it our earnest Business, to find out Spe-
 ' cific Remedies, that wheresoever this Science

is Weak in Theory, such may keep up its Majesty and Weight. And, doubtless, nothing can conduce more to the Health of Mankind, than Physicians applying themselves to search out such Remedies, which, by divine Appointment, are Speciflicated to every Distemper; whereof infinite Goodness, in commiseration to our manifold Infirmities, hath provided as great a Variety, as there are Diseases incident to Mankind. But so scanty is our Knowledge, that *maxima pars eorum que scimus, est minima pars eorum que nescimus*. We may truly say of Vegetables, what the Queen of Sheba once said of Solomon's Wisdom and Magnificence, *the half of them hath not been declared or revealed to us*. Nay, such is our Misfortune, in this respect, that the Vertues of those Roots and Plants already known, and which might be of great Service, are lost and destroy'd by Heterogeneous Mixtures, whereof Galen, in his Time, makes a grievous Complaint, as a principal thing, whereby the practical Knowledge of the *Materia Medica* was greatly obstructed.

Galen de
Medica-
mentorū
Composi-
tione,
Lib. 1.

In Epist.
ad lib. de
Compos.
Medic.
lib. 1. c. 1.
Rerum
Medic.
lib. 1. c. 1.

Scribonius Largus, who flourished in the Times of *Tiberius* and *Claudius* the Emperors, prefer'd Simple Medicaments before Compounds. And *Ottavianus Horatianus*, under *Valentinian* the Emperor, condemn'd both Compounds, and all foreign Remedies; maintaining, that in every Country, Nature had provided a Sufficiency of *Simples*, to answer all Indications, and for every Age, Disease, and Occasion whatsoever. *Pliny*, a most eminent Naturalist, is very important for the Use of simple Remedies; As also *Paulus*, *Agineta*, *Actius*,

Actius, and others, both ancient and modern Authors.

The usual Practice of Physick, for curing this Disease, I have observ'd to run in a manner chiefly upon Evacuation, with the Use of the Decoction of the Woods, and some other Simples; which Medicines are so generally known and fix'd, that if 500 People were afflicted with this Distemper, and as many Physicians consulted, a Man might not only pretty nearly guess, what each of them would prescribe; but also, what Effects each Person might expect from their Prescriptions. But now, as this my *Specifick* Remedy is new and uncommon, so likewise are its Operations different from any Medicines I ever yet knew or heard of. For, no sooner is this Remedy incorporated with the whole Mass of Blood, but the scrophulous Ulcers open like so many Flood-Gates, pouring out the Humour, with a mighty Current, which, to every body's thinking, should rather waste and consume the Body, than increase its Strength and Vigour. But, on the contrary, by how much the more plentifully the Humour spends itself this way; by so much the more hearty and strong do People grow: Experience fairly intimating this to be the most proper Means to perform a Cure; because this viscous and stubborn Humour, which will not yield to other Evacuations, tho' never so strong, is hereby thrown out, the Way which Nature indicates to disburden herself. This pass'd for a Maxim with *Hippocrates*; *those* Aphor. 21 *things, saith he, which are to be carry'd off, are to be drawn whither they most incline, through such*

such Ways and Places, as are safest for Conveyance and Expulsion. And methinks, it should easily be allow'd, that to promote a regular *Secretion* of the *Morbifick Matter* in those Places where Nature hath determin'd to empty herself, is the most rational and safest Method for *Eradicating* of this Disease, tho' sometimes with some People, this *Specifick Remedy* will precipitate this Humour, and bring it away by *Urine* also. Which, as the divine *Hippocrates* hath elsewhere observ'd, is a good Sign of a succeeding Cure.

Nat. Hist.
p. 168.
Exper.
692.

Phar.
Extemp.
p. 88.

Advancement of Learning.
page 196.

Wise Physicians (saith the Lord Bacon) should, with all Diligence, enquire what Remedies Nature yieldeth; having extreme subtil Parts, without any *Mordication* or *Acrimony*; for they [saith he] undermine that which is *hard*, they open that which is *stopp'd* and *shut*, and they expel that which is offensive gently, without too much *Perturbation*. And the ingenious Dr. Tho. Fuller saith, that *Specificks* are found, by Experience, to have Respect to one Part, more than another; that a Medicine may strike a particular Impression upon one Humour, and not touch another: Whereof the Doctor gives us many Instances. And, indeed, the Suffrages of all our eminent Physicians and Naturalists do agree, that Remedies might be found to act more directly upon some particular Parts and Humours, than upon others: Which, as the Lord Bacon truly observeth, is the Cause why *Empericks* and old Women are more happy, many times, in their Cures, than Learned Physicians; because they are faithful and steady to those approv'd Medicines, which they have found out for particular Diseases; and

and therefore, saith he, it would be matter of good Consequence, if some Physicians of Note for Learning and Practice, would compile a Work of *Probations, and experimental Medicines for the Cure of particular Diseases*. To say the Truth, those simple Remedies which by a *Specific* Propriety respect the Cures of particular Diseases, are very few; nay, in a manner, quite lost. Men of late Years deducing the Causes of all Distempers from those Two giddy Notions of *Alkaly and Acid*, have put their Indications of curing all Distempers upon that Foot, tho', at the same time, they are wholly ignorant what *Acid* produceth any Disease, or what *Alkaly* removes it. *Pliny* says, we are ignorant of what we live upon, but, in my Opinion, we are less acquainted with that which makes us sick. Daily Experience convinceth us, that our Constitutions are injured by a thousand things which are neither *Acid* nor *Alkaly*, nor any thing like them; And, on the contrary, that many Distempers are cured by those very things, which, according to our Reason and Way of thinking, are directly opposite to the very Nature of the Disease: *We see Contraries often prove Remedies to one another in the Gymnasticks, and Poisons become beneficial, when oppos'd stica. to certain Humours; the World has, lately, had full Evidence of the Good Effects of an intense Cold, equally apply'd to all the parts of the Body at once, which Method of Curing, some Years ago, was thought very extravagant, and certainly destructive.* But to proceed:

After I had fully experienc'd the Excellency and Usefulness of this Medicine, in my
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own Case; I thought myself obliged, in Point of *Charity*, to make it publick; that others, if they pleased, might reap the same Benefit by it, as, blessed be God, I had done. And tho' I do not pretend to make any new Discoveries concerning the Cause or Production of this Disease; yet, I conceive, I have some reason to esteem myself capable of helping those who at any time shall desire my Assistance. For, besides the Knowledge (which God hath blessed me with) of this *Specifick Remedy*, I have likewise gained some other Skill from my past Sufferings, which I reckon may be very conducive to the Cure of this Distemper. I hope, for instance, I am able to give a satisfactory Account, what Tumours are scrophulous, and what are not. I know as well the Temper and Constitution of People afflicted with the *Evil*, as I did my own, and can easily tell when they will suffer Pain, and when not; when their Sores will run little or much; at what Seasons their Swellings will rise or fall; and when they will break; and the like. Of these things I have given a satisfactory Account, as divers People will bear me witness. Physick (as a certain Author hath long since observed) doth always profess to have Experience for the Proof of its Operations. And it was *Plato's* Opinion, that, in order to be a true Physician, a Man should first suffer all those Diseases he pretended to cure, and pass through all those Accidents and Circumstances he was to judge of in others. This, I must confess, is a severe Position; and if no Man were to practise but upon these Conditions, I fancy Physick would have but few Professors; tho',

Montaigne's Essay.

tho', doubtless, the best Knowledge is ever gain'd by a Man's own Experience and Observation, which, as *Celsus* observes, is the principal thing to inform Men in a right Method of Cure. *Apbr. 10. Sect. 9.*

Diet is another thing from whence myself receiv'd considerable Benefit. And herein I think myself not unqualify'd, to give those necessary Directions, which, if observ'd, would prove of very great Use and Service to Persons afflicted with this *Evil Humour*: A Part of Physick of that Importance, that *Hippocrates*, and all other ancient Physicians, do testify a very great Regard unto it, as a principal thing conducive to the Cure of most Diseases. Good Management in this respect, I find, (tho' it will not absolutely cure this Disease) is highly Useful, and very Efficacious, to aid and assist, and to give an Energy to the Operation of proper Medicines. One thing more which, by my own Experience, I found to have a commanding Power in this Distemper, to give Pain or Ease, is the Quality or Disposition of the *Air*: Wherein I was so critical in my Observations, that upon the least Turn or Change of the Weather, I knew as well what I was to expect, as if a Messenger before-hand had given me Warning. And whosoever undertakes the curing of this Disease, will find such Natural Observations of great Use, not only to direct him in the Cure, but also to prevent Perturbations of Mind, in those labouring under this Distemper, arising from its Ebbings and Flowings, which, indeed, are very sudden and surprizing. If any one thinks

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these and such-like are Trifles, let him enjoy his Opinion: In the mean time, it's my Judgment, whoever carelessly neglects these things, will have no great Success with this Distemper. The divine *Hippocrates* hath, in several of his Aphorisms, fully shew'd the Usefulness of these Observations, to direct Men in their Methods of curing Diseases. And the ingenious Dr. *Wainwright*, in his Book of *Non-Naturals*, hath clearly demonstrated what great Alterations are made in our Bodies, according to the various Changes of the Air; affirming, that from such Notices, better Indications may be taken both for the Prevention and Cure of most Diseases, than from any other Source whatsoever. *The Animal Ooeconomy*, (saith a late ingenious Author, with great Truth) is itself such a considerable Part of Natural Philosophy, and our Bodies are so strongly influenc'd by Variety of Diets, and so many other things without, that, indeed, the whole Study of Nature seems to be useful to him that would understand it. *Herodotus*, an ancient Author, tells us, that in Egypt Physicians were obliged to apply themselves to the Study and Improvement of but some one Disease. Every Physician, saith he, hath one Disease for his Province, and no more, &c. The Design whereof, doubtless, was very good, and of great use to the Republick of Physick: Because hereby Physicians acquir'd a more certain and perfect Knowledge of the Nature and Disposition of particular Diseases, and of things hurtful and beneficial in each Distemper; and, consequently,

P. 65.

Dr. Keill
of Animal
Secretion.Lib. 2.
Sect. 84.

sequently, were better able to fence against all ill Accidents and Revolutions arising from the various Changes of the Weather, or improper Diets, and many evil Habits, whereunto each Disease hath a direct Tendency.

As I judged these no improper Qualifications for one who undertook to help others, so, blessed be God, I have met with an answerable Success. As I treat others as I did myself, so I find the very same common Effects. Their Sores run with the same Flux of Matter upon taking this *Specifick Remedy*, as mine did. I have a Box of Scales and foul Bones, the largest that ever were seen, driven out by this Anti-Strumatick Liquor. Their *Urine* likewise I have frequently observed as thick and ropy as my own used to be; and tho' they were never so Weak and Lame, yet I always find their Strength daily increasing, as mine did: Neither did I ever know this Humour break out afresh upon any Person cur'd by this Method, no more than it hath done with me these 20 Years past; the Truth whereof I can make appear by a Cloud of Witnesses, from their own Experience.

So far as I am able to judge from the large Experience I have had, first on myself, and now upon others, one of the greatest Difficulties in making a complete Cure of this Distemper in most People, with this Method, is Length of Time, which many have not Patience to submit unto, not considering the Stubbornness of this Disease, above all others; that Nature being brought very low, and

Natur.
Hist. of
Life and
Death.

worn out, in a manner, with the long Duration of the Illness, together with the emaciating Methods in common use, cannot so soon accomplish the Concoction and Dispumation of the Morbifick Matter, as they could wish : This tempts them to try other Medicines, but with so little Advantage, that they oftentimes run themselves into greater Evils ; according to that Observation, long since deliver'd by the Lord Bacon, *That as Variety of Medicines is the Off-spring of Ignorance, so many Medicines have caused few Cures.* To which Observation, I may add another of equal Truth, that the most authentick Evidences of a Man curing this or any other Disease, are not sufficient to satisfy some People prepossess'd with Prejudices ; So that if a Man were morally certain of curing any one Distemper, yet he would find it a difficult point to convince some, tho' he produc'd an hundred Instances of his Success. And the reason may be this, because Physicians, and those depending on them, have in all places so bitterly run down Persons and Things exclusive of their own Knowledge and Practice, that People think there's no *Balm in Gilead* but what's in their Hands. Tho' I would not have you to think, that I am of the Number of those vain-glorious Boasters, who assume all Knowledge to themselves, asserting nothing less than perfect, absolute Cures in all Cases whatsoever. This I utterly disclaim, and should be asham'd of ; very well remembring, that when I was seeking Help for myself, I never met with greater Disappointments, than from infallible Pretenders.

Such

Such Persons who offer perfect and infallible Cures, would do well to consider the Modesty of that ingenious and learned Artist, Mr. Serjeant *Wiseman*, who, perhaps, knew as much of this Disease, and likewise took as much Pains to bring the Cure thereof to some Perfection, as any Man whatever, either before or since his Time; yet he, like an honest Man, after Thirty or Forty Years Practice, hath declar'd, that the *Contumaciousness of this Disease had not only eluded his best Care and Industry, but also some of the ablest Physicians and Surgeons* Lib. 4. in his time. My Pretensions only are, that p. 239. whereas, I had this Distemper in a very high Degree, and have, with God's Blessing, been myself cured by this Remedy; Proving the same also upon others with undeniable Success; I shall only honestly apply the same Means to any Person, leaving the Success to Almighty God. With this farther Testimony for all Peoples Satisfaction, that if this *Specifick Remedy* should not cure them, it will do them no Hurt: Not one of those many Hundreds that have taken of it having ever complain'd of the least Injury attending its Use.

Thus, Sir, I have given you a short Account of what I have done for myself with this *Specifick Remedy*, and likewise how successful others have found it; I confess, when I resolv'd, first of all, to make it known unto the World, I found some Difficulty to persuade myself to yield to its Publication in the Prints; but as I saw that was in a manner necessary, so I have this Comfort and Satisfaction against all Censures and Reflections upon that Account; that,

that, by so doing, I have had the Opportunity of Curing some Scores of People who might have rotted alive, had it not been for those Advertisements. Some, I am sure, who once thought me unworthy of their Notice, have, by that means, sought my Assistance, and found it effectual. And tho' this Way of publishing Medicines and Cures, is now esteem'd *Quackism*, yet by the History of Physick, it appears, if the Ancients could have had the same Convenience they would have done the like: For, *whosoever had gain'd any Experience on himself or others, saith Herodotus, made it publick.* And, again it was the Custom, saith the same Author, to carry their Sick and Diseased into the Markets, that all People, passing by, might give their Advice, and encourage others to try what themselves and others had, in the like Case, used with Success. But whatever may be thought of this, surely a Design so compassionate, as to deliver Mankind from one of the greatest corporal Evils that can befall them, needs no Apology nor Excuse; for this, I have the Sense of the ingenious Doctor *Wainwright*, in his Treatise of *Non-Naturals*. To attempt any thing, saith he, for the Improvement of useful Arts, especially, that of Medicine, which is of the greatest Benefit to Mankind, is a Debt which every capable Person owes to the Publick. I hope, no good Man will revile me, then, upon this Account: And, as for others, it's to me no great matter, what they say; however, since I would be civil to all, I will beg your Patience while I gratify Two or Three Persons

Persons so far, as to take some Notice of their Objections.

One thinks to slur this my *Specifick*, by exclaiming against all Medicines of that Nature; styling them *Subterfuges* of Ignorance &c. I leave him to the Mercy of the whole College, who must either pronounce him a meer *Ignoramus*, or else disclaim the *Jesuits Bark* and all other *Specificks*. It's natural for mean and abject Spirits to envy other Mens Prosperity and Success. And, therefore, to use his own Expression, I shall not confute him any other Way, than by (what he really deserves) *Slight and Contempt*. Another insinuates, that *Pres. to* I am no Surgeon, therefore, how I should do any the King's Good upon so unaccountable a Malady, is what he Evil per- does not understand, and wonders at. Now, it's *fectly* natural to expect, that the least Understan- *cur'd.* ders should be the greatest Wonderers. If this Man's Understanding be short, that's not my Fault: However, for once, I'll do him the Favour to shew him, that he understands more than he's aware of; provided he understands what is to be found Page the 20th of the Book set out in his Name; for if it be true, that what *Artist soever can perfectly rectify the vicious Acti- p. 10.* dity of the first Digestion, must necessarily cure this Distemper, in Course; and as naturally accomplish the Work, and with as much Truth too, as it is to take away the Effects, by removing the Cause; I think he must understand, (I am sure every Body else will) that there is not, then, any absolute Necessity of manual Operation.

If I thought this doughty Author knew any thing of Mr. Boyle, I could tell him, that it was that Gentleman's Opinion, that inward Remedies might be found out, able to effect Chirurgical Cures; whereof he hath given us many extraordinary Instances in divers Cases. And I could likewise refer him to the learned *Bartholinus's* Observations, who, tho' a Surgeon, is yet on my Side. Again, I remember, (saith *Gulielmus Piso*, in his Account of those great things which he saw done in Surgery by the Illiterate *Indians*) that the Limbs of Dutch and Portugal Soldiers wounded with Gunshot, were happily cured with their recent Juices, Gums and Balsams, without Knife or Cauteries. But few People apply themselves to me, who have not undergone all those Chirurgical Operations applicable in this Disease, twice or thrice over; so that what Reason have I to trouble them afresh with those things, wherein they have, for many Years, found so little Benefit; and especially, so long as I am able to do the Business by gentler Methods? For the Truth whereof, I appeal to some of this Man's own Patients, at this time, under my Care; and to others of them long since cured by me. For my part, I reckon it a great Happiness, that, in this Case, I can help others, without inflicting those Torments of cutting, cauterizing, and the like: The Consequences whereof, one of the greatest Surgeons we have had, long since declar'd, were more fatal and dangerous than the Disease itself. I speak not this to prejudice People in other Cases against Surgery, but only in this, wherein

wherein I never knew manual Operation do any Service. But I will, for the present, dismiss this Man; after I have noted one Discovery that he hath obliged the World with, well worthy himself; It is in his first Chapter, where, On his learned Account of the Greek and Latin Names of this Disease, and their Etymology, p. 6. he slides in this curious Remark, that a *little Pig cometh of an Old Sow*. Now, that a Pig cometh of a Sow, most People know; but that it must be from an old Sow, is what neither the Etymology of the Word, nor the Nature of the thing, requires. For the first, *Goldman's Dictionary*, if he knows such a Book, would have given sufficient Satisfaction. As for the latter, how unskilful *Pref.* soever old Wives may be in Medicine, yet I doubt not but they could have set him right in this *Phænomenon*. Tho' this Man despiseth *Old Wives Medicines*, I can assure him, the famous Doctor *Wallis* thought himself beholden to an old Woman for curing him of a violent Bleeding at the Nose, which, at times, had troubled him many Years, whereof he could never free himself; until she, accidentally coming into the Room where he was bleeding, told him the *Medicine*; which, to my Remembrance, was one single Plant. But to pass by this Man's Contempt of old Wives Medicines; I wonder, the Reverend Mr. *Gaynam*, a Schoolmaster, was not more correct in this Author's Orthography, than to suffer him to print *Alcalious* for *Alkalious Medicines*. Surely, neither of them very

D

well

well understood the Derivation of the Word *Alkali*, which in Chymistry signifies a fixed Salt taken from the Herb *Kali*.

The last Person to whom I must pay my Obligations, is, indeed, a Man of Learning and Judgment; and he thinks, it's Objection enough, that I am a *Quack*.

I do not know what Provocation I have given him, (unless that I cured one of his Patients almost blind of both Eyes with the *Evil*) and, therefore, as he is a Man of Abilities, I would beg the Favour of him, that, at his Leisure, he would oblige the World with a Disquisition, whether the Foundation of Physick was not first laid in *Empericism*. I know, indeed, the Rationalists have, at all Adventures, charg'd the Emperical Tribe with Ignorance, Unskilfulness, and the like. But yet, with me, it seems a Question, whether it be not manifest, that more useful Remedies have been brought to Light by them, than all the Productions of Learning and Philosophy amount unto. *Celsus*, a Wise Man, as well as a Physician, (speaking of the Emperical Sects of Physicians) hath, long since, acknowledg'd, that *Medicines and Cures were first found out, and afterwards the Reasons and Causes discover'd: not the other Way that the Causes first extracted from the Nature of Things, gave Light to the Invention of Remedies.* Much to the same purpose, speaketh that excellent Physician, Doctor *Thomas Fuller*, *It was not speculative Philosophy and fine spun Hypotheses, but Experience and Observation that taught us the Use of Remedies.*

De re
medica.

Remedies. The Honourable Esquire *Boyle* frankly acknowledgeth, that in all those Places where there is least Learning, there the most and best *Specificks* have been found out, because (saith he) such Persons having no other Knowledge of Medicine, than what the Light of Nature helpeth them to, have, thereby, brought to Light several Remedies, which Nations of greater Learning and Politeness are wholly ignorant of. The Men of Medicine in the *Voyage East and West-Indies*, are meer *Quacks*, to be *chap. 34.* sure, to our *English* Physicians. And yet *Lin-* *Lawson's* *choten* for the one, and *Lawson* for the other, assures us, that they not only cure their own Country-Men, but ours to. Now to take no more than these Premises; I think, there seems some Reason to infer from them, that extraordinary Remedies are not always (if they are ever) the Fruits and Effects of extraordinary Learning, much less of being Graduated in a Profession. And, therefore, till this Matter is better clear'd up, I cannot be of Opinion, that any Man being call'd a *Quack* by a *M. D.* is a just Objection against his Ability of Curing any particular Distemper. The Honourable Esquire *Boyle*, the Reverend Mr. *John Ray*, and some others, tho' no profess'd Physicians or Surgeons, have, by their Writings, done great Service to both. And, therefore, *Pref. to* what Mr. *Thomas Fern* enviously suggesteth, *the King's* is false, *viz.* that the Knowledge of either *Evil per-* of these Sciences is above the Sphere of other *ety cur'd.* Mens Capacities as to *internal Remedies*, and beyond their Reach as to *manual Operation.*

Doctor *Wagstaff*, a Divine in this City, and the Reverend Mr. *Mansel* of *Northamptonshire*, the one for Physick, and the other for Surgery, have given full Proof of their great Abilities and Success in each; not to mention some others of the Clergy in the Country, who, to the great Comfort and Satisfaction of their poor indigent Neighbours, practise both: Therein following the Example of their blessed Master; who, as he made the Soul the peculiar Object of his Heavenly Doctrine, so he likewise heal'd the Diseases and Infirmities of Mens Bodies. And they who consider the great Influences which the various Dispositions of our Bodies have over the Qualities and Operations of the Mind, will soon be convinc'd, that a Man ought to understand natural, as well as moral Causes and Effects, and join Divinity and Physick together. *We lay this down for a certain Maxim, [saith the Divine Hippocrates] that Diseases of the Body will hardly be conquer'd by any Medicines, unless the Mind be in a State of Tranquillity, and gain the Ascendant over the Passions; that so the turbulent Spirits may recover their primitive Harmony and Repose.*

But not to detain you, Sir, any longer with these trifling Bickerings; as I envy no Man's Learning, Titles or Abilities, so I take all possible Care to make no Man angry or uneasy at the Good God has enabled me to do; refusing all Patients so long as they are under the Care of others, whether Physicians or Surgeons, and should be glad to hear they meet

meet with better Success elsewhere. That *Mr. Serr*
 great Artist I before spoke of, is of Opi-^{gent}
 nion, that most of those Diseases mention'd ^{Wise}man,
 in his Chirurgical Treatise, do participate
 of the *Evil* : I know not whether one
 might entirely subscribe to that great Man's
 Judgment in the Matter, but this, I believe,
 must be allow'd, that, with us, very few Fa-
 milies are wholly clear of it; so that it's to
 be fear'd, there will be Work enough for all.

The Leaving out those many Cures which
 you saw in the Two former Impressions of this
 Letter, (besides a considerable Number which
 I had once resolv'd to annex to this) I must
 ask your Pardon for; because I find, Persons of
 Substance and Figure in the World are not
 willing it should be made Publick that they
 have had this Disease, lest it should prejudice
 their Families: And even some of the numerous
 Poor whom I have cur'd, *gratis*, have been very
 unwilling to expose themselves. I, therefore,
 think fit to wave that Method, and to leave
 all who desire Satisfaction of my Success,
 to those private Directions I am always rea-
 dy to give upon the least Demand, there be-
 ing scarce any Place in or about this City, or
 any County in *England*, where Men, Women
 and Children (rich and poor) may not be found
 to testify their Cures by this Method, whereof
 I have given you this short Account.

From my House in
 Sherburne-lane,
 near Lombard-
 street,

I am, SIR, Yours.

F I N I S.

not with better success elsewhere. That the
great: And I believe I have a right to
in his Christian Treatise, do participate
of the Law: I know not whether one
might entirely subscribe to that great
judgment in the Matter, but I believe
must be allowed, that with us very few
millions are wholly clear of it: so that it is to
be feared, there will be a great number for all.
The Cause of the poor, which
you saw in the two former editions of this
Latter, contains considerable Numbers which
I had once resolved to annex to this, I must
ask your Pardon for, because I had found of
Substance and figure in the West, and not
willing it should become Public, that they
have had this Edition, but it is now in the
their Pages: And even some of the numerous
Poor whom I have not known have been very
unwilling to expose themselves to the
think it to have that Method, and to have
all who desire Satisfaction of any Success
to their private Distress, I am always ready
to give upon the least Demand, there be-
ing scarce any Place in order, this City or
any County in England, where Men, Women
and Children (as at a poor) may not be found
to relieve their Cases by this Method, whereof
I have given you this short Account.

I am, Sir, Yours,

J. N. 1. 2.

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